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PATENT
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IBM-211

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of	:	Fernando Incertis Carro, et al.
Serial Number	:	09/805,745
Filing Date	:	March 8, 2001
Examiner	:	Odaiche T. Akpati
Group Art-Unit	:	2135
For	:	METHOD AND SYSTEM OF MARKING A TEXT DOCUMENT WITH A PATTERN OF EXTRA BLANKS FOR AUTHENTICATION

TO: The Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Post Office Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Official Action dated September 13, 2004, please consider the following remarks with respect to the patentability of Claims 1 - 8 in the above-identified application. The present invention relates generally to the authentication of digitally stored and transmitted documents (i.e., soft-copy documents) and to steganographic data hiding techniques; and more specifically, to a system and to a method for authenticating plain text documents, mark-up language documents and messages (i.e., e-mails, ASCII documents, text files, fax files, HTML files, source code program files, etc.) by encoding and hiding the integrity information (i.e., a MAC or digital signature) of the text document into the pattern formed by the distribution of the blanks present in the text in the document.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

The present invention discloses a new method of marking an original text document with encoded data in which the number of existing inter-word blank characters is altered.